

MUNICIPALITIES



Records Disposition Authority

**Revision Approved by
the Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Municipalities

Sources of Information

Municipal Government Officials (Cities of Decatur, Gadsden, Gulf Shores, and Madison)
ADAH Government Records Division, Local Agency History Files
ADAH Government Records Division, Municipal General Records Schedules, 1998
ADAH Government Records Division, State Personnel Department RDA (2000)
Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)
Alabama Government Manual (1998)
Alabama League of Municipalities. *Selected Readings for the Municipal Official* (1996)
Code of Alabama 1975
Constitution of the State of Alabama 1901
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Thomas, James and William Steward. *Alabama Government and Politics* (1988)

Historical and Political Context of Municipalities

“In Alabama, as nearly everywhere else in the United States, cities [have] . . . come from the growth and expansion of villages,” or else arisen due to “proximity to natural resources, particularly mineral wealth or transportation facilities” (Owen, vol. I, p. 264). Birmingham, Decatur, and Mobile all offer good illustrations of the latter point. Municipal governments originated well before statehood: Mobile, for instance, was founded in 1702. Nevertheless, urbanization came slowly to the state. In 1850, only “28 towns in Alabama [had] a population of more than 200.” Even by 1900, a mere “17.7% of the . . . population lived in incorporated towns.” Modern Alabama contains about 450 towns and cities, although nearly half boast fewer than 1,000 residents. Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-40-6, all municipalities with over 2,000 inhabitants are cities; those with under 2,000 inhabitants are towns. The Code also establishes eight classes of municipalities (Section 11-40-12), based on population figures from the 1970 census. However, the classes are misleading, as no Class 1 municipality has existed since Birmingham’s official population fell below 300,000, and the overwhelming majority of towns and cities are in Classes 6 through 8.

From a political standpoint, “municipal corporations are bodies politic and corporate, established by law, to share in the civil government of the county, but chiefly to regulate and administer the local or internal affairs of the city, town, or district which is incorporated” (*Dillard v. Webb*, 55 Ala. 468 [1876]), quoted under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-40-1. As a body politic, a municipality derives its power from the state and acts as an arm of the state legislature, exercising delegated legislative powers for the welfare and protection of all citizens. It cannot, however, “legislate beyond what the state has either expressly or impliedly [*sic*] authorized” (*City Council v. Foster*, 133 Ala. 587, 32 So. 610 [1902], *op. cit.*). As a body corporate, a municipality exercises ministerial powers: it may (for example) acquire property, collect revenue, regulate commerce, and maintain public order for the benefit of the corporation as a whole. Despite their great diversity in age, size, and organizational complexity, all municipalities serve as agents of the state and county, provide

services to citizens, protect the quality of life, safeguard the environment, and establish the direction of their future development and growth.

Agency Organization

Under Title 11, Chapters 43, 43A-D, 44, and 44A-F, the Code of Alabama permits several possible methods of municipal political organization. (The works by Martin and Thomas & Stewart, cited above, are the source of all quotations.)

- **Mayor-Council.** This form of government is by far the most widespread, characterizing 97% of Alabama's municipalities in 1994. "The mayor is the formal head of the municipal government and the chief executive officer," with "broad powers of supervision over the administration of municipal programs" and finance, although the council shares appointive powers and retains full responsibility for legislation. The mayor's role varies depending on whether a municipality has more, or fewer, than 12,000 inhabitants. In the towns and smaller cities, "the mayor sits with the council, presides over its meetings, and has a discretionary vote," but lacks the veto power. In larger cities, the council sits alone and the mayor may veto its ordinances, subject to being overridden by a 2/3 vote. A number of mayor-council municipalities employ a city administrator, who performs specified administrative duties on behalf of the mayor and council but has less autonomy than a city manager (see below).
- **Council-Manager.** This form of municipal government is set forth in Title 11, Chapter 43A of the Code of Alabama 1975. A manager is "employed by the council to supervise administration," with the mayor acting only as "ceremonial head of the city" and having no administrative duties other than presiding over council meetings. The council retains full legislative power and the right to establish municipal departments. The manager is entrusted with enforcing laws and ordinances, appointing and supervising most employees (excluding board members and merit system employees) without intervention by the mayor or council, preparing the annual budget, administering finances, and reporting to the council. As under the mayor-council system, the municipality may employ a clerk and a treasurer, or the manager may perform their duties. Although appointed for an indefinite term, the manager may be removed at any time by a 2/3 vote of the council. Currently, only five Alabama cities (Anniston, Auburn, Phenix City, Talladega, and Tuskegee) use this form of government. Anniston and Phenix City do so under local legislation.
- **Mayor-Commission-Manager.** Uniquely, the City of Dothan combines all three of the other forms described. Special legislation authorizing this arrangement is found under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-44E [1988].
- **Commission.** Under this plan, which formerly was common in large Alabama cities, municipal executive and legislative powers were concentrated in the hands of three commissioners elected by the city as a whole. Each commissioner headed one of three municipal "departments" which aggregated the city's many functions. One commissioner acted ceremonially as mayor. This form of organization is now extinct in Alabama.

Municipal Functions and Subfunctions

The functions of municipal governments are inherent in their legislative mandate, found under Title 11 of the Code of Alabama 1975. Each municipality is virtually a microcosm of state government, carrying out within its corporate limits all the functions that multiple state agencies perform statewide. The duties of “core” municipal agencies—councils, mayors, city managers or clerks, and “service” departments (e.g., street departments, utility departments, zoning boards)—fall under the Policy and Statute Development, Public Services, Economic and Community Development, Regulation, Law Enforcement/Emergency Powers, and Administrative Support Operations functions identified for Alabama local government. Other municipal agencies may perform specialized activities under Public Services (housing authorities, boards of education, hospitals, libraries), Stewardship (archives and museums), or Law Enforcement (police departments). However, because they are not “core” municipal agencies (and may, in fact, be either county or municipal), disposition for their records will be provided in separate RDAs. Municipal courts (Law Enforcement) are part of the state court system and are therefore not included in this RDA.

This functional analysis is written from the standpoint of mayor-council municipalities. Although such functions as Policy and Statute Development, Economic and Community Development, and Regulation may be carried out rather differently in council-manager municipalities, research so far indicates that this fact makes little difference in the records they create. A separate functional analysis for council-manager municipalities will be prepared, if needed, when one of those municipalities requests a separate RDA.

In the performance of their mandated functions, municipalities may engage in the following subfunctions:

Policy and Statute Development

- **Making and Implementing Policy.** This subfunction relates to drafting, promulgating, and implementing ordinances, resolutions, and other municipal policy statements, as authorized by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-45-1. Department heads and attorneys assist the mayor and council in drafting the budget and other legislation. The council promulgates ordinances and resolutions during open meetings, where public debate may influence final action. Unincorporated municipal boards and commissions advise the council on policy development in areas under their authority; separately incorporated boards enjoy considerable autonomy. The municipal clerk records, certifies, and codifies approved council legislation and sends it to the mayor for signature. Ordinances must be published in a local newspaper, if available, or posted in three public places. The mayor (or, in a council-manager municipality, the city manager) is responsible for implementing and enforcing legislation, although this activity is normally carried out through the municipal departments.
- **Authorizing Revenue Collection.** Like counties, towns and cities are delegated powers of taxation by the state. Title 11, Chapter 51 of the Code of Alabama authorizes the collection of municipal revenue through business and occupational licensing; gross receipts or sales tax; *ad valorem* taxes; and taxes on lodging, rentals, and such commodities as wine, beer liquor,

and gasoline. The council passes the necessary ordinances and allocates the resulting funds to meet departmental expenditures and the interest on bonds and other indebtedness. All expenditures must fall within the annual budget. Processes involved in actual revenue collection are covered under Regulation (licensing) and the financial management subfunction of Administrative Support Operations (taxation).

- **Managing Elections.** In Title 11, Chapter 46, the Code of Alabama prescribes the duties of the mayor and clerk in providing ballots and supplies for municipal elections; preparing, certifying, and publishing poll lists; canvassing returns; handling absentee ballots; deciding contested elections; and filing a copy of each certificate of election with the county probate judge.

Public Services

- **Building and Maintaining Streets and Bridges.** Except by special arrangement with the county, a town or city is responsible for streets within its corporate limits. Alabama courts have generally construed the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-47-90, as imposing a positive duty upon municipalities to maintain streets in safe condition. The street departments of most larger towns and cities therefore construct and repair streets and bridges, put up traffic signs and lights, mow grass along public rights-of-way, and otherwise make travel easier for citizens. Heavy work, such as resurfacing, may be performed by private contractors. Some activities related to this and other Public Services subfunctions (inspections, nuisance abatement) will be covered under Regulation.
- **Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities.** This subfunction pertains to the operation and maintenance of airports, bus lines, parking garages, and other public transportation services or facilities that a municipality may provide for citizens. The operation of some facilities, such as airports, may be subject to state and federal requirements.
- **Providing Utility and Sanitation Services.** In return for fees, municipalities may provide power, water, sewage, garbage and trash collection, and landfill services to residents, either directly or by contracting (through an ordinance) with private service vendors. They administer these operations through either a municipal department or an incorporated or unincorporated board. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) regulates municipal water departments and sanitary landfills, establishing retention requirements for some records they create.
- **Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service.** Section 11-43-140 of the Code of Alabama 1975, authorizes municipal fire protection services, although there is no positive duty to provide them. Firefighters must be trained at the municipality's expense, as mandated by Code Sections 36-32-1 through 36-32-12. Under Sections 22-18-20 through 22-18-44, the Alabama Emergency Medical Services Commission sets standards and procedures for all local emergency medical services, which are also subject to federal regulation. Some municipalities operate consolidated 911 dispatch units for responding to police, fire, and emergency medical service calls.

- **Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities.** Under Alabama law, towns or cities may establish parks and recreation boards to oversee social and recreational developments. This subfunction covers all activities pertaining to operating such facilities as municipal community or recreational centers, parks, zoos, ball fields, and skating rinks. Facilities that safeguard and provide access to historical or cultural collections—such as archives and museums—will be treated in a separate RDA, as are local racing commissions. Civic centers, which often provide a location for recreational events, are covered below under Economic and Community Development.
- **Providing Public Cemeteries.** This subfunction pertains to all activities pertaining to the operation and maintenance of municipal cemeteries.

Economic and Community Development

- **Planning and Improving Community Development.** All municipalities, regardless of size, are authorized to create planning commissions under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-52-1, *et. seq.* This subfunction also entails evaluating the effects of economic growth so that the municipality's physical environment, services, and quality of life can keep pace with its development. City planning commissions cooperate with other municipal departments and boards, the mayor, and the city council in this work.
- **Recruiting Business and Industry.** The object of this subfunction is to attract new business ventures to the municipality. Towns and cities may cooperate with regional planning commissions and non-government agencies, such as chambers of commerce and tourism councils, in promoting municipal resources to potential businesses and residents. They may operate civic centers and industrial parks as sites to attract business conferences and industrial development.
- **Obtaining Financial Assistance.** The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and various other state agencies are charged with the responsibility of soliciting state and federal grant funds for local economic and community development. Counties and municipalities work primarily through one of twelve regional planning commissions that undertake comprehensive advisory planning for their region and act as intermediaries in receiving and disbursing federal, state, and private grant funds for various local programs.

Regulation

- **Licensing and Permitting.** Numerous activities require municipal licenses or permits, which serve both to regulate and as a source of revenue. Depending on a town or city's size and structure, business and occupational licenses (authorized by the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-51-90 through 11-51-91) may be issued either by the clerk's office or by a separate department. A municipal council may, by ordinance, award franchises for certain services, such as taxicab or cable television companies (Section 220 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901). Subject to state ABC Board regulation, the council also approves liquor

licenses and decides the hours in which alcoholic beverages may be sold. It may also rescind the licenses of businesses found to be in violation of municipal codes or ordinances.

- **Inspecting.** As an essential safeguard of the public interest, inspection is a pervasive element of Regulation. Inspections in such areas as public health and housing may be performed by agencies outside the “core” municipality. Municipal building, street, or engineering departments monitor compliance with codes during construction projects and also license contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers. Under Sections 36-19-4 and 36-19-11, the city fire marshal is responsible for inspections to enforce the fire code.
- **Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions.** In 1923, the legislature gave municipalities the power to zone all territories within their corporate limits (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-52-70). This power is enacted through a zoning ordinance dividing the municipality into districts, or zones (based on their suitability for certain uses); and regulates the construction, renovation, and use of buildings and land therein accordingly. Municipal planning commissions may hear requests for developing subdivisions and rezoning property. Municipal zoning boards of adjustment interpret zoning ordinances and hear requests for variances. Adverse decisions of the zoning board of adjustment may be appealed to the circuit court.
- **Abating Nuisances.** Alabama law gives municipalities broad authority “to abate all nuisances and to assess the cost against the person” responsible for them. Towns and cities may pass ordinances against unvaccinated or loose animals (Section 11-47-110; see also information under Title 3), weeds growing on neglected or abandoned property (Section 11-47-140), or junk collections that fall outside the parameters allowed for licensed junkyards (Sections 23-1-240 through -251). The municipality’s power to issue fines and rescind licenses provides leverage in eliminating noisy, offensive, or dangerous activity at “honky tonks” and similar establishments. If a nuisance violation remains uncorrected, the town or city may take action in the courts.

Law Enforcement and Emergency Powers

- **Maintaining Public Order.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975, the mayor and council may take reasonable precautions against disruptions of the peace, usually by issuing ordinances, resolutions, or proclamations. Besides recruiting a police force, the mayor and council may establish curfew ordinances (Section 11-45-1), refuse to license potentially dangerous places of amusement (Section 11-51-102), require permits for parades and demonstrations, issue proclamations closing places that sell arms if a disturbance threatens (Section 11-43-83), and ask the governor to call out the National Guard in time of riot (Section 31-2-111).
- **Managing Emergencies.** This subfunction relates to preparing and carrying out emergency responses in time of disaster. The Alabama Emergency Management Act of 1955 (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 31-9-2 through 31-9-10) created a state and various local emergency management agencies. In most jurisdictions, cities take part in a county-wide disaster recovery organization. The state and local EMAs, along with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA), offer several kinds of emergency management assistance. They make recommendations on disaster planning; administer state and federal matching grants; provide training in risk evaluation and damage assessment; and—in case of disaster—distribute relief funds; establish control centers; and coordinate responses at the local, state, and federal levels.

- **Maintaining Incarceration Facilities.** All municipalities have the power to establish jails and prisons (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-47-7 through 11-47-8). Alternatively, under Section 11-80-3, the mayor of a town or city may contract with the county to use one of its jails. For municipal jails, the city council must provide adequate janitorial service for prisoners, and twice annually “shall thoroughly fumigate and cleanse the jails” (Sections 14-6-92 through 14-6-93). The State Department of Corrections inspects the jails, also twice annually. Its recommendations are to be published in a local newspaper at the council’s expense (Sections 14-6-82 and 14-6-91).

Administrative Support Operations

- **Financial Management—Taxing and Collecting Revenue.** As noted, council ordinances provide for the collection of gross receipts, sales, and other taxes to support municipal administration. The Alabama Revenue Department collects and audits sales and use taxes for many cities, remitting them on a bi-monthly schedule. A few cities, such as Selma, collect their own *ad valorem* taxes; elsewhere, the task is performed by county tax collectors. However, towns and cities have a role in selecting members of their county’s board of equalization (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 40-3-2). Municipal finance divisions enforce the tax code, audit tax returns on taxes collected by the town or city, investigate fraud, and maintain records of taxation and licensing activities. Municipal attorneys handle the litigation of taxation cases, when required.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of municipal government work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the municipality’s programmatic areas. These activities include:

Managing the agency. Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies, such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling; meeting; documenting policy and procedures; reporting; drafting promoting, or tracking legislation; publicizing and providing information, managing records; and managing information systems technology.

Managing finances. Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing a budget package, submitting the budget package to the council, documenting amendments and performance of the budget, and reporting on established budget categories); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, accounting for expenditures, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency’s budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or indivi-

duals; bidding for products and services; assisting in the audit process; investing; and issuing bonds.

Managing human resources. Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, promoting, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; and disciplining.

Managing properties, facilities, and resources. Activities include: inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities, leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property owned by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis Of Record-Keeping Systems and Records Appraisal of Municipalities

Agency Record-Keeping Systems

Alabama's municipalities usually operate hybrid record-keeping systems composed of paper, microforms, and electronic records. Nearly everywhere, records are created electronically but maintained primarily in paper format. Records are often stored on-site in office space or storage vaults, with occasional off-site back-up of microfilmed or computerized records. Most towns and cities lack the environment, space, and financial resources needed for optimum preservation of their public records. Nevertheless, a number of municipalities employ regular destruction cycles, alternative storage media, records centers, and even archives as well-integrated components of a sophisticated records management program.

The increasing trend toward computerization makes it imperative for municipalities to recognize the importance of separating permanent from temporary records, devising sound migration strategies, and maintaining reliable back-up copies of digitized records. With the impending demise of microfilm (traditionally the most stable back-up medium) ensuring the latter safeguard will become more difficult. Providing the necessary training in electronic record-keeping must become a greater focus of ADAH assistance efforts to state and local agencies. Meanwhile, for basic information on electronic record-keeping, agencies may consult the technical leaflets "Guidelines for Maintaining Permanent or Long-Term Records on Digital Imaging Systems" and "Guidelines for Managing E-Mail," available on the ADAH website at: <http://archives.alabama.gov/officials/leaflets1.html>.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of the two major categories of records created and/or maintained by Alabama municipalities: Temporary Records and Permanent Records.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary records should be held for what is considered to be their active life and disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Records discussed here have been added, or revised in disposition, since the last revision of the RDA.

- **Water Treatment Surveys and Reports (5.08).** Local water treatment systems are subject to regulation by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). New requirements in the 2005 revision of Chapter 335-7-10.05 and -10.06 of the Alabama Administrative Code have led to the inclusion of additional records in this edition of the RDA. These records include water quality control tests and monthly reports of such tests to ADEM (5.08a); reports, summaries, and correspondence related to sanitary surveys or system inspections conducted by local, state, or federal authorities, as well as internal inspections (5.08e); complaint files (5.08f); and disinfection monitoring plans (5.08j) recently mandated by ADEM. Except for the last two items, retention periods for these records follow ADEM requirements. Its requirement for complaint files (-10.05[d]) calls for them to be retained "3 years after complaint is received," changed here to "after complaint is *resolved*." In item

10.05(i), ADEM set no retention requirement for disinfection monitoring plans; the period proposed here would require water systems to retain their current plan until a new one is approved by ADEM.

- **Commercial and Residential Building Plans, Permits, and Permit Logs—Abandoned projects (11.06c).** This revision was approved in April 2008 for the City of Montgomery. The records include documents, plans, and drawing that are submitted for permitting. They may also include permitting information and notes recorded by the municipality’s plan review staff. After one year of no activity or contact with the permit applicant, projects documented by these records are considered abandoned. Further retention of the records serves no purpose, because the permit applicant must “start over” to resubmit the project.
- **Records Management Documentation—Records request forms (17.14d).** Under Section 36-12-40 of the Code of Alabama, municipalities have a general (though not absolute) duty to provide access to their records. The courts, in *Blankenship v. City of Hoover* (590 So2d 245 [Ala. 1991]), have established that a municipality may ask visitors who wish to examine records to complete an identification form before permitting access. Typically, these forms contain such information as the visitor’s name and contact information, the date and time of the request, the records requested, the reason for requesting access, and staff comments. Although such information may not be cited as a reason for denying access, the forms have value in discouraging records’ theft or damage by documenting who has used them. ADAH recommends the use of records request forms as one component of an agency’s records access policy. The proposed disposition assumes the records will be auditable, like others covered in this item. As always, any forms involved in litigation or criminal charges arising from records access issues should be retained until conclusion of the case.
- **Records of Formal Bids (18.06).** These records document the municipal bid process, which is subject to the requirements of Title 41, Chapter 16, Article 3 of the Code of Alabama. In this revision of the RDA, records documenting individual bid projects (18.06a) retain the 7-year retention period mandated by Code section 41-16-54(e). Records proposed for addition include lists of eligible bidders maintained by municipalities (18.06b) and correspondence with bidders slated for removal from the eligible list (18.06c). Under Code section 41-16-54(a), a bidder who fails to respond to three bid solicitations may be dropped. The change proposed would allow municipalities to dispose of correspondence related to this process, as well as their outdated lists of vendors.
- **Federal Form 1099 (19.24).** This form is used to report various kinds of income, other than salary, that must be reported for federal tax purposes. It may be issued by the municipality to contract workers, or other temporary workers, who provide services but are not on the regular payroll. The proposed retention period is federally mandated and suffices for municipal audit and accounting purposes.
- **Facilities/Buildings Security Records (20.08).** These records document the municipality’s efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. This revision of the RDA adds security

monitoring and response recordings (20.08a). The proposed disposition allows the original recordings to be routinely recycled every 30 days, after sections pertaining to incidents likely to result in criminal charges or litigation have been copied. The resulting copies must be retained, like similar records in other jurisdictions, until the final disposition of cases for which they provide evidence.

II. Permanent Records. The Government Records Division recommends the following records as permanent:

Making and Implementing Policy

- **Municipal Incorporation Records (1.01).** Municipalities derive their power to promulgate local legislation from their status as incorporated bodies. Petitions for the incorporation of a town or city, and its original charter of incorporation, are filed in the county probate office for permanent retention (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-41-4). In some cases, however, the probate office's copy of the charter has been lost or cannot be located. The historical importance of original articles of municipal incorporation warrants the permanent retention of these records by the municipality itself, either in the clerk's office or in a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records depository agreement.
- **Administrative Correspondence (1.02).** This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the mayor, council, and department heads. It may reflect the influence of citizens on policy development; include statistics, technical information and reports of long-term administrative value; and document planning activities conducted by municipal governments and allied agencies, such as state or federal authorities or the area's regional planning commission.
- **Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets (1.03).** The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-25A-4, stipulates that a municipality must document the proceedings of all meetings held by municipal officials. These records include minutes of the council and all municipal boards, commissions, committees (including council committees), and authorities, as well as those of incorporated boards that service the municipality. Besides minutes, they include meeting/hearing agendas and packet materials reviewed by members (copies of budgets, work plans, and other background information) prior to meeting. Minutes of individual boards and authorities are not individually appraised; they are listed (with individual numbers), under the appropriate subfunctions, along with the program records of these agencies. Normally, approved policy recommendations by municipal boards, commissions, and authorities are codified in council ordinances. Meeting minutes and related records are essential to document the evolution of municipal policy and procedures.
- **Ordinances (1.05a).** Council ordinances are a municipality's primary legislative record and provide the basis for budgeting, licensing, code enforcement, nuisance abatement, and similar activities. They are essential for documenting policy development and are appraised as permanent.

- **Codified Ordinance Books (1.05b).** Periodically, a municipality may codify its ordinances by having them checked for legal compatibility with such sources as the Code of Alabama, the Alabama Administrative Code, and applicable federal rules and regulations. Normally, professional codification companies perform this service for a fee. Once the research is complete, the approved ordinances are published as a book, which the municipality maintains as a permanent record.
- **Administrative Codes and Regulations (1.05c).** While codes in such areas as housing or sanitation may be based on state and federal requirements, they arise from a municipality's inherent right (see Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-40-1) "to regulate and administer" its own affairs. Departmental codes and regulations originate as council ordinances and are therefore listed under Policy and Statute Development in the RDA. However, they primarily document the Regulatory activities of municipal departments. Although permanent records, codes and regulations may be amended or rescinded by passing a new ordinance.
- **Resolutions (1.06).** Resolutions document council legislation that generally concerns "one-time" municipal events rather than ongoing policy decisions. (For example, the council's rules of procedure are normally embodied in a resolution.) Like ordinances, resolutions are essential for documenting policy development and are appraised as permanent.
- **Proclamations (1.07).** Mayoral proclamations, like council resolutions, generally document policy statements or official pronouncements on "one-time" municipal events. They are also appraised as permanent.
- **Citizen Petitions (1.08).** Citizens may petition the council or municipal departments on a variety of public issues, such as annexation of outlying areas, provision of municipal services, property assessment or rezoning, or nuisance abatement through license revocation. These records document the impact of citizen opinion on policy development and therefore have important evidentiary value. They do not pertain to matters specifically regulated by the Code of Alabama, such as municipal incorporation, consolidation, or dissolution; or matters that require the holding of a special municipal election.

Authorizing Revenue Collection

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in council resolutions authorizing revenue collection. The actual collection of revenue is permanently documented in municipal audit reports, listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction, and in records maintained by county taxation officials.

Managing Elections

- **Maps of Municipal Council Districts (2.02).** These maps document the boundaries of each municipal council member's electoral district. Although used primarily for municipal elections, collectively they help to document the city or town's changing geography, demography, and voting patterns over time. Therefore, their historical value warrants permanent retention.

Building and Maintaining Streets and Bridges

- **Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings (3.01).** As they document the municipality's ownership of right-of-way over lands on which roads and bridges are constructed, these records have permanent legal and historical value. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way, and the land's location. A copy of the deed is kept on file at the county probate office.
- **Aerial Photographs (3.02).** These records provide a photographic record of the municipality's surface characteristics. Aerial views of streets, bridges, bodies of water, and other structures and topography are recorded in photographs that are used in planning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of municipal government.
- **Street Project Plans, Specification, Maps, Plats, and Photographs (3.04).** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal streets. Information available includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings. Because they have historical interest and provide primary documentation of an important municipal subfunction, overall project plans, specifications, maps, and plats are appraised as permanent.
- **Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs (3.05).** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information available in them includes overall project plans and specification, photographs, and maps or drawings. Although these records have no administrative utility beyond the life of the bridge, they may have permanent value in documenting bridges of significant historical interest.

Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities

- **Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints (4.04).** Like maps, plans, and blueprints for other municipal buildings and facilities, these records are appraised as permanent for their evidentiary and historical value. Master vs. "as-built" plans show any differences between projected and completed airport construction or improvement that might affect the safety and efficiency of airport operations. Layouts are continually updated to reflect changes that may influence the airport's technical performance.

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

- **Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs (5.02).** These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its service vendors. Under Title 11, Chapter 50 of the Code of Alabama 1975, such records shall be available for inspection by the affected property owners. However, the proposed disposition allows the eventual destruction of records for systems or reservoirs not actually leased or purchased by the county, once the potential for litigation has expired.

- **Annual Water Quality Reports (5.08k).** These are “reports pertaining to the quality of water or operation of [a municipality’s] water supply system.” They are required under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended in 1986 and 1996, and now codified under Title 42 CFR. Under the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 335-7-10.05(h), copies of the report “shall be furnished to [ADEM] upon request and must be available for review by the public.” The Montgomery Water Works and Sanitary Sewer Board’s reports (which are published and appear on the board’s website) contain “information about the source of [Montgomery’s] water and the process used to purify it,” as well as tables of annual laboratory test results, public health information, and tips on maintaining home sewer systems. The records provide excellent summary documentation of municipal water works’ services to citizens and compliance with state and federal regulations. They are therefore appraised as permanent.

Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service

- **Fire Investigation Reports—reports of investigations that result in criminal charges (6.01).** All records of fire investigations were formerly appraised as permanent because there is no statute of limitations on the crime of arson (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 15-3-5). However, not all fires are caused by arson. The proposed revision permits the destruction of records for cases in which no criminal charges were filed to be destroyed 10 years after the investigation was resolved.

Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities

Permanent records documenting this subfunction include council ordinances authorizing municipal community or recreational centers, parks, zoos, ball fields, skating rinks, or other recreational facilities; minutes of boards or authorities established to oversee their operation; and general ledgers or audit reports that record financial transactions.

Providing Public Cemeteries

- **Sexton’s (Cemetery) Records (8.01).** The sexton is the cemetery’s manager, issues permits for all burials within the city limits, and maintains information on all bodies buried on municipal cemetery grounds. These records are appraised as permanent because of their historical and genealogical significance.

Planning and Improving Community Development

Permanent records documenting this subfunction include meeting minutes and administrative correspondence of the planning commission or city council (depending on the municipality’s size and organization). These records are appraised under Making and Implementing Policy. Maps and plats that document construction projects in the municipality are appraised as permanent under the subfunctions covering streets and utilities, housing, zoning, and municipal property management. Statistical and narrative reports that monitor economic growth are found in packets distributed before planning commission or council meetings and in administrative correspondence.

Recruiting Business and Industry

Besides the records mentioned above, minutes and administrative correspondence of industrial development boards provide permanent documentation of this subfunction. They are appraised under Making and Implementing Policy. Permanent documentation of civic center operations is found in council minutes, administrative correspondence, and financial management records listed under Administrative Support Operations.

Obtaining Financial Assistance

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in records listed under the Administrative Support Operations function, such as audit reports and grant final reports. It may also be reflected in planning commission or council minutes and administrative correspondence with regional planning commissions and state and federal authorities.

Licensing and Permitting

- **Annual List of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality (11.01).** These records provides summary documentation of business activity in the municipality. Information available includes business names, owners' names, and street addresses. Although the creation of these records is not mandated by the Code, and not all municipalities create them, annual business listings have permanent historical and genealogical value where they do exist, as they provide a "snapshot" of business life in the community.

Inspecting

Permanent documentation of this subfunction will be found in statistics included with agencies' annual reports and appropriation requests included with annual budget packages. In cases where repeated failure of inspections leads to license revocation, it will also be reflected in council minutes.

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

- **Subdivision Files—final plans, plats, maps, and photographs (13.04a); statements dedicating streets to the municipality; council resolutions (13.04b).** Subdivision Files, final plans, plats, maps and photographs of subdivisions are appraised as permanent records, like most other plats, maps, and photographs. Statements dedicating streets to the municipality, and council resolutions assuming maintenance responsibility, are normally included with the council minutes.

Abating Nuisances

Permanent documentation of this subfunction will be found in council minutes and ordinances, as well as in municipal audit reports, listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction.

Maintaining Public Order/Managing Emergencies

Permanent documentation of this subfunction would be found in mayor proclamations or council ordinances that established curfews, declared martial law, or took other emergency management measures. These records are listed under Making and Implementing Policy.

Maintaining Incarceration Facilities

Permanent documentation of municipal jail administration (including contracts for facilities leased from the county) will be included in audit reports, listed under Administering Internal Operations. Operational records of jail administration are included in a separate RDA for law enforcement agencies.

Financial Management—Taxing and Collecting Revenue

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is contained in council ordinances or resolutions authorizing the collection of municipal taxes and property assessments, as well as in annual budgets, audit reports, and annual financial reports.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

- **Administrative Policies and Procedures (17.01).** These records document policies and procedures established by the municipality on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and municipal employees. They provide primary documentation of the government's philosophy and execution of mandated functions under the Code of Alabama and may have critical evidentiary value in case of litigation. Municipal policies may be available to citizens in printed form.
- **Annual Reports (17.03).** Municipal agencies may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during the calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of the town or city and its government.
- **Historical and Publicity Files (17.04).** A municipality may issue press releases, newsletters, or informational brochures and videos to publicize particular projects or activities. The mayor, council members, or other officials may retain photographs, copies of speeches or presentations, and similar records that document significant events and the town or city's history. These records have evidentiary and historical value that extends well beyond their immediate utility. They should be permanently retained in municipal offices or in a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.
- **Web Sites (17.05).** Many Alabama towns and cities are now developing web sites for responding to public inquiries and providing information on municipal affairs. Material on the site may include: information on the municipality's location, population, demography; organization and officials, economic, cultural, and educational resources; and other information describing the town or city's "way of life." In order to provide documentation of this

record over time, the proposed disposition calls for a “snapshot” the site to be retained as often as significant changes are made.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

- **Approved Annual Budgets (18.01b).** The municipality’s annual budget, as approved by the council, is published as an ordinance and is therefore a permanent record. Changes to the budget during a fiscal year also take the form of ordinances. (See the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-43-57, 11-43-84, and 11-45-1 through -8). The proposed disposition allows additional copies of the budget to be destroyed when no longer needed.
- **Annual Financial Reports (18.01d).** At the end of the fiscal year, a final statement of the municipality’s finances may be included in council minutes and distributed in published form. The proposed disposition again permits the destruction of additional copies.
- **Audit Reports (18.02).** These records document a municipality’s overall financial condition, and the findings of its independent auditor, during each audit period (normally one fiscal year). For towns and cities that do not publish annual financial reports, audit reports (required by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-43-85) are the primary means of providing long-term fiscal accountability. They include information on the municipality’s current accounting procedures, bookkeeping problems, compliance with state and federal regulations, and record-keeping practices.
- **General Ledgers—general ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances created prior to 1975 (18.03b).** The general ledger is the record of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting fees and other revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting. Originally, general ledgers were manually created; now, these records and another financial summary, the detailed year-end trial balance, are often electronically created. This revision of the RDA limits permanent retention to general ledgers and trial balances created before 1975. Later records retain the 10-year period previously approved for those in electronic format. Annual Financial reports (18.01d) and Audit Reports (18.02) provide permanent documentation of municipal financial practices.
- **Grant Project Final Narrative Reports (18.08b).** Either directly or through the assistance of regional planning commissions, municipal governments are frequently the recipients of state or federal grants. Most documentation associated with these grants is short-term accounting material. The final narrative report, however, summarizes the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished. They therefore have permanent evidentiary value in documenting important municipal projects.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

- **Employee Handbooks (19.03).** Employee handbooks provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other municipal policies and procedures. They may serve as evidence of compliance with state and federal hiring practices and may be used in personnel-related litigation.

- **Employee Newsletters (19.04).** Employee newsletters offer a narrative of the municipality's employment policies, employee programs and benefits, and information on individual employees. Along with employee handbooks, they provide the primary documentation of human resources management.
- **Job Classification and Pay Plans (19.05).** These records document the various job classifications used by the municipality. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each municipal position. As the most complete record of municipal job classifications, they provide a profile of the municipality and its services to citizens over time. However, if the town or city has a separate personnel department, the proposed disposition provides for shorter retention of copies held by other municipal departments.
- **Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires (19.13).** These records summarize overall municipal personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations. In larger municipalities where personnel operations are handled by a separate department, this statistical compilation usually serves as the department's annual report.
- **"Drug Free Workplace" Records (19.17).** This is a new series, scheduled at the request of the City of Gadsden, but now created by most local governments. The records document municipal substance abuse policies and training, as well as drug and alcohol testing of municipal employees. Under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in employee personnel files. The proposed disposition is generally based on 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). Under federal requirements, training records, testing records, and medical information (drug treatment referrals) are all short-term. However, municipal policies and procedures on drug and alcohol abuse are scheduled here as permanent, like other policy-related records.
- **Training Records—Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications (19.22a).** These records document the municipality's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or other publications. Like other administrative policies and procedures, they are appraised as permanent. Documentation of municipal training standards may also be needed to demonstrate that employees received adequate training in the performance of their job responsibilities.
- **Municipal Building Construction and Renovation Files—plans, specifications, and blueprints of city halls and other municipal buildings of significant historical interest (20.01a).** As their title indicates, these records are appraised as permanent because of their significance in documenting the municipality's history through its public buildings. Although "historical interest" is a subjective commodity, the requirement should ensure that plans and blueprints of historically or architecturally significant buildings are preserved. The disposition allows the transfer of these plans or blueprints to local libraries, archives, or similar historical repositories. Item "c" has been added to ensure that records of rented buildings remain with the facility whenever it is no longer under municipal jurisdiction.

Permanent Records List Municipalities

Making and Implementing Policy

1. Municipal Incorporation Records (1.01)
2. Administrative Correspondence (1.02)
3. Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets (1.03) (includes records of boards, commissions, and authorities listed under individual subfunctions)
4. Ordinances (1.05a)
5. Codified Ordinance Books (1.05b)
6. Administrative Codes and Regulations (1.05c)
7. Resolutions (1.06)
8. Proclamations (1.07)
9. Citizen Petitions (1.08)

Managing Elections

1. Maps of Municipal Council Districts (2.02)

Building and Maintaining Streets and Bridges

1. Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings (3.01)
2. Aerial Photographs (3.02)
3. Street Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs (3.04)
4. Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs (only for bridges having historical significance) (3.05)

Providing Public Transportation Facilities and Services

1. Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints (4.04)

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

1. Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs (for systems leased or purchased) (5.02)
2. Annual Water Quality Reports (5.08k)

Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service

1. Fire Investigation Reports—reports of investigations that result in criminal charges (6.01)

Providing Public Cemeteries

1. Sexton's (Cemetery) Records (8.01)

Licensing and Permitting

1. Annual List of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality (11.01)

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

1. Subdivision Files (Final Plans, Plats, Maps, and Photographs; Statements Dedicating Streets to the Municipality; Council Resolutions) (13.04a & b)

Administering Internal Operations - Managing the Agency

1. Administrative Policies and Procedures (17.01)
2. Annual Reports (17.03)
3. Historical and Publicity Files (17.04)
4. Web Sites (17.05)

Administering Internal Operations - Managing Finances

1. Approved Annual Budgets (18.01b)
2. Annual Financial Reports (18.01d)
3. Audit Reports (18.02)
4. General Ledgers—general ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances created prior to 1975 (18.03b)
5. Grant Project Final Narrative Reports (18.08b)

Administering Internal Operations - Managing Human Resources

1. Employee Handbooks (19.03)
2. Employee Newsletters (19.04)
3. Job Classification and Pay Plans (19.05)
4. Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires (19.13)
5. "Drug-Free Workplace" Records—policy and procedure documentation (19.17)
6. Training Records—Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications (19.22a)

Administering Internal Operations - Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

1. Municipal Building Construction and Renovation Files—plans, specifications, and blueprints of city halls and other municipal buildings of significant historical interest (20.01a).

Municipal Records Disposition Authority

This records disposition authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through -24. It was compiled by the Government Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of municipal governments. The RDA lists records created and maintained by towns and cities in carrying out their mandated function and subfunctions. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for municipalities to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their office. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successors in office and made available to members of the public. Records must also be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the ADAH Government Records Division at (334)242-4452, or records@archives.alabama.gov.

Explanation of Records Requirements

- This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of municipal records. Copies of superseded schedules, and previous versions of this RDA, are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records of municipalities. It does not require the creation of any record not normally created in the conduct of municipal business, although the creation of certain records may be required by the municipality's administrative procedures, work responsibilities, audit requirements, or legislative mandates. Individual municipalities may not necessarily create all of the records listed below.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.
- Certain other short-term records that do not materially document the work of an agency may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include: (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; and (2) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes and may include, but are not limited to: telephone call-back messages; drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value; copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business; and internal communications about social activities. They may be disposed of without docu-

mentation of destruction. Other items that may be disposed of without documentation of destruction include: (1) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document activities; (2) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus printed materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete.

- Any record created by the municipality prior to 1900 shall be regarded as permanent.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of municipalities and lists records created and/or maintained by municipal agencies in carrying out those subfunctions. Individual towns or cities may submit requests to add or revise specific records disposition requirements to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration as its regular quarterly meetings.

1. Making and Implementing Policy

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.01	Municipal Incorporation Records. These records include petitions for the incorporation of a town or city, and its original charter of incorporation. Municipal incorporation records are filed in the county probate office for permanent retention, but the legal and historical importance of these records warrants the retention of any copies by the municipality itself.	PERMANENT Retain in office or offer for transfer to a local archives or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.
1.02	Administrative Correspondence. This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the mayor, council, department heads, and other municipal officials.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.03	Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document meetings of the council and all other boards, commissions, authorities, etc. involved with municipal activities. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings. <u>Note:</u> Records of individual boards and authorities are listed, with individual numbers, under the subfunctions that they oversee.	PERMANENT
1.04	Recordings of Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim account of debate and public input at meetings of the municipal council and municipal boards, commissions, or similar bodies. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.	Retain until minutes are approved.
1.05	Ordinances, Codes, and Regulations	
a.	Ordinances. Council ordinances are a municipality's primary legislative records and provide the basis for budgeting, licensing, code enforcement, nuisance abatement, and similar activities.	PERMANENT
b.	Codified ordinance book. This book provides a printed compilation of municipal ordinances after a codification service has checked them for legal compatibility with such sources as the Code of Alabama, the Alabama Administrative Code, and applicable federal rules and regulations.	PERMANENT
c.	Administrative codes and regulations. Municipal codes and regulations originate as council ordinances and are administered by municipal departments. They are designed to regulate such activities as housing, zoning, and public health within the corporate limits.	PERMANENT
1.06	Resolutions. Resolutions document council legislation that generally concerns "one-time" municipal events rather than ongoing policy decisions. The council's rules of procedure are normally embodied in a resolution.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.07	Proclamations. Mayoral proclamations, like council resolutions, generally document policy statements or official pronouncements on “one-time” municipal events.	PERMANENT
1.08	Citizen Petitions. Citizens may petition the council or municipal departments on a variety of public issues, such as annexation of outlying areas, provision of municipal services, property assessment or rezoning, or nuisance abatement through license revocation. These records document the impact of citizen opinion on policy development and therefore have important evidentiary value. They do not pertain to matters specifically regulated by the Code of Alabama, such as municipal incorporation, consolidation, or dissolution; or matters that require the holding of a special municipal election.	PERMANENT If petition is filed with council minutes or departmental administrative correspondence, duplicates may be destroyed.
1.09	Legislative Reference Files	
a.	Legislative tracking files. These records are created to track draft legislation. They include copies of draft legislation, statistics, names of legislative sponsors, roll call votes, position papers, and correspondence.	Retain for useful life.
b.	Code of Alabama	Retain in office until superseded; then offer to a local library, archives, or historical society.
c.	Acts of Alabama	Retain in office until amended; then offer to a local library, archives, or historical society.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.09	d. House and Senate Journals	Retain in office until superseded; then offer to a local library, archives, or historical society.

2. Managing Elections

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title/Disposition</u>
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2.01 Municipal Election Records. Note: These records exclude official results of the election, which are filed as permanent records with the county probate judge.

- a. **Statements of candidacy, ballots, poll lists, and election supplies used in the conduct of municipal elections.**
- b. **Petitions for election to determine classification of municipality as “wet” or “dry.”**
- c. **Absentee election materials (ballots and affidavits)**

Disposition: Retain 6 months after an election, unless the election has been contested. If the election is contested or results in litigation, retain until the contest is resolved, litigation is terminated, and all appeals processes are exhausted.

For elections with a federal race on the ballot, retain for 22 months after the election, then destroy unless the election has been contested. If the election is contested or results in litigation, retain until the contest is resolved, litigation is terminated, and all appeal processes are exhausted.

After an election, “return all unused absentee election materials [ballots and affidavits] to the Secretary of State along with an itemized, signed statement showing the description and quantity of each item of absentee election material not utilized by the county or municipality in the election just concluded” (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 17-10-24 [1996]).

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
2.02	Maps of Municipal Council Districts. These maps document the boundaries of each municipal council member's electoral district.	PERMANENT

3. Building and Maintaining Streets and Bridges

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3.01	Right-of Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings. These records document the municipality's ownership of right-of-way over lands on which streets and bridges are constructed. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way, and the land's location.	PERMANENT
3.02	Aerial Photographs. These records provide a photographic record of the municipality's surface characteristics. Aerial views of roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other county structures and topography are recorded in photographs that are used in planning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of municipal government.	PERMANENT
3.03	Street and Bridge Construction and Maintenance Project Files. These records document day-to-day activities on a street or bridge construction project site. The files note such information as the name of the contractor(s), project personnel, project name and number, weather condition, tests and test results, results of soil and structural component tests, progress reports, and cost estimates. They may also contain permit information, vendor applications, reports, and correspondence. <u>Disposition:</u>	
	a. Results of soil and structural component tests	Retain for life of street or bridge.
	b. All other records	Retain 10 years.
3.04	Street Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal streets. Information in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3.05	Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.	
a.	Records of bridges of significant historical interest (agency staff may wish to consult the state Department of Transportation, the Alabama Historical Commission, or the county historical society in evaluating the historical significance of local bridges)	PERMANENT Retain in office for life of bridge; agency may then offer for transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records depository agreement.
b.	Records of other bridges	Retain for life of bridge.

Note: For routine street and bridge operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, telephone/radio logs), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions (no.'s 17-20).

4. Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
4.01	Transportation Authority Records	
a.	Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets. These records document meetings of the transportation authority. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.	PERMANENT
b.	Hearing files. These files document citizen appeals to the transportation authority, as well as hearings and the authority's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.	Retain 6 years after authority's decision and settlement of all appeals.
4.02	Federal, State, and County Aviation Regulations. These records include Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] regulations, advisory circulars, and security and operations manuals; the <i>Alabama Department of Aeronautics Manual</i> ; county emergency management agencies' emergency operations manuals; and other materials used by municipal airport authorities in establishing and updating policies and procedures.	Retain until superseded.
4.03	Airport Certification and Procedures Manuals. These records include certification requirements, policies and procedures, and related information compiled by the airport in compliance with FAA and other federal or state regulations. They govern airport operations in such areas as security, maintenance, concessions, contract formulation, and personnel. Individual manual pages or regulations may be superseded and discarded as requirements are updated by the FAA or other oversight authorities.	Retain until superseded.
4.04	Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints. These records consist of at least one copy of all versions of maps, plans, and blueprints for municipal airports and related facilities, including any variations between master and "as built" plans.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
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4.05	Approach Slope Condition Reports. These records document approach slope conditions at municipal airports.	Retain until superseded.
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4.06	Airport Evacuation Agreements. These records document agreements made in plans for evacuating municipal airports.	Retain until superseded.
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Note: For routine airport operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, telephone/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the “Administering Internal Operations” subfunctions (no.’s 17-20).

5. Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
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5.01	Utility Board/Commission Records.	
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a.	Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets. These records document meetings of the utility board or commission. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.	PERMANENT
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b.	Hearing files. These files document citizen appeals to the utility board or commission, as well as hearings and the board’s decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.	Retain 6 years after board’s decision and settlement of all appeals.
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5.02	Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs. These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its service vendors. Disposition requirements for the records are as follows:	
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a.	Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of systems or reservoirs leased or purchased	PERMANENT
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<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.02	b. Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of external systems or reservoirs not leased or purchased	Retain 10 years after expiration of contract.
5.03	Utility and Sanitation User Agreements. These records document agreements between the municipality and users of its utility and sanitation services. Information available in these records includes the names and addresses of customers, amount of deposits paid, and terms of the agreement.	Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the agreement was terminated.
5.04	Applications and Exemptions for Sanitation Fee Exemption. These records document the process that determines whether persons may be exempted from solid waste collection charges.	Retain 2 years following audit.
5.05	Utility Meter Reading, Billing, and Collection Records. These records are created to record monthly meter readings by utility staff and to document billing and collection activities on utility and sanitation customer accounts. Information available includes customers' names and addresses, account numbers, meter location numbers, monthly meter readings, amounts due, and amounts/dates paid. This series includes customers' remittance copies of utility bills and Daily Cash Receipt Reports.	Retain 2 years following audit.
5.06	Utility and Sanitation Customer Complaint Logs. These records document complaints by utility and sanitation customers and the agency's actions in regard to them. The may include such information as the customer's name and address; date, time, and nature of the complaint; names of utility personnel assigned to respond; and any actions taken.	Retain 3 years.
5.07	Utility Department Operational Records. These records document routine utility department operations that do not relate to billing and collection. Items include work orders, operations/dispatch logs, operational reports, and records documenting variations in amounts of power or water provided over time. Disposition of the records is as follows: a. Work orders	Retain 1 year.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.07	<p>b. Operations/dispatch logs</p> <p>c. Operational reports (daily, monthly, quarterly or annual reports of utility or sanitation operations)</p> <p>i. annual or quarterly reports (if no annual report produced)</p> <p>ii. daily, monthly or quarterly reports (if annual report produced)</p> <p>d. Records documenting power fluctuations, or similar variations in service, to individual business or residential customers</p>	<p>Retain 3 years.</p> <p>Retain 5 years.</p> <p>Retain for useful life.</p> <p>Retain 10 years.</p>
5.08	<p>Water Treatment Surveys and Reports. Local water treatment systems are subject to regulation by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). (See Chapter 335-7-10.05 of the Alabama Administrative Code.) These records include the following:</p> <p>a. _____ Water quality control tests and monthly reports to ADEM</p> <p>b. Water reservoir level and temperature readings</p> <p>c. Water temperature operational reports (daily reports)</p> <p>d. Bacteriological monitoring reports</p> <p>e. Water system sanitary surveys and reports. These records include sanitary surveys and reports, summaries, and correspondence related to surveys or system inspections conducted by system staff or by local, state, or federal authorities.</p> <p>f. Complaint files</p>	<p>Retain 3 years or until next sanitary survey, whichever is longer.</p> <p>Retain for useful life.</p> <p>Retain 5 years.</p> <p>Retain 5 years.</p> <p>Retain 10 years.</p> <p>Retain 3 years after complaint is resolved.</p>

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.08	g. Water system regulation violation correction reports	Retain 3 years after correction of violation.
	h. Water system regulation exemption records	Retain 3 years after exemption or variance.
	i. Chemical analysis reports	Retain 10 years.
	j. Disinfection monitoring plans	Retain until replacement plan has been approved by ADEM.
	k. Annual water quality reports. These reports are required annually under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the Alabama Administrative Code. They may contain summary documentation of water sources and purification processes, annual laboratory test results, public health information, and advice to citizens on maintaining their home sewer systems.	PERMANENT
5.09	Landfill Records. These records include those required by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) for the management of sanitary landfills. (See Chapters 335.13-4-.20(3)(a) and 335.13-4-.29) of the Alabama Administrative Code.) The records include the following:	
	a. Permits	Retain 5 years.
	b. Engineering drawings; closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/correction plans	Retain 30 years after closure of landfill, or until released by ADEM.
	c. Operational reports (daily, monthly/quarterly, annual reports of garbage/trash intake)	Retain 10 years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.10	Landfill Service Collection Records. These records document billing and collection activities on landfill customer accounts. Information available includes customers' names and addresses, account numbers, amounts due, and amounts/dates paid.	Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: For other routine records of utility and sanitation departments (grants, bids and service contracts; personnel and training records; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions (no.'s 17-20).

6. Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.01	Fire Investigation Reports. These records document the investigation of fires by the municipal fire department. Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 15-3-5), there is no statute of limitations on the crime of arson.	
a.	Reports of investigations that result in criminal charges	PERMANENT
b.	Reports of investigations that do not result in criminal charges	Retain 10 years after investigation is resolved.
6.02	Fire Department Run Reports. Municipal fire departments maintain a record of all trips when emergency vehicles are dispatched. Inside the city limits, the report consists of caller's name, address, and phone number; and date and time of call. Outside the city limits, the report also includes a service fee bill to the owner and directions to the address.	Retain 10 years.
6.03	Emergency Medical Service (Ambulance) Run Reports. These records document each trip made when an emergency vehicle is dispatched. The report details the date, address, name of person transported, and disposition (i.e., whether taken to hospital, doctor's office, home, or mortuary).	Retain 7 years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.04	Fire/911 Department Dispatch Records. These records document fire or emergency management departments' responses to calls for emergency or routine assistance. Information available in these records includes the time and date of the call, name and location of the caller, nature of the emergency, officers/vehicles assigned, and similar data.	
a.	Dispatch books, cards, or logs	Retain 3 years.
b.	Recordings (radio tapes, audio or video tapes, CD's, or other recorded media)	
i.	Information that does not become part of a case file	Retain 6 months.
ii.	Information that becomes part of a case file	Retain until final disposition of all cases for which recording provides evidence.
6.05	Fire/Emergency Medical Service Department Operational Reports	
a.	Fire/EMS/hazardous materials incident reports	Retain 10 years.
b.	Fire/EMS daily/monthly reports	Retain 1 year.
c.	Fire/EMS annual reports	Retain 2 years.
d.	Fire damage reports	Retain 5 years.
6.06	Blood-Borne Pathogens Reports. These reports are filed whenever fire department/EMS personnel are exposed to blood-borne pathogens. The report becomes part of the employee's work history. Federal requirements mandate minimum 30-year retention of these records.	Retain 30 years or 6 years after separation of employee, whichever is longer.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.07	Emergency Medical Service Patient Collection Records. These records consist of invoices that document ambulance service provided and the amount of money due from patients, as well as computerized summaries of such information. Information on the invoice includes patient's name, address, and phone number; date of service; list of services provided and amounts owed; and total balance due.	Retain 3 years (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 560-X-18).

Note: For routine fire department/EMS operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids and service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, telephone/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions (no.'s 17-20).

7. Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
7.01	Parks and Recreation Board Records	
a.	Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets	PERMANENT
b.	Hearing files. These files document citizen appeals to the parks and recreation board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files. <u>Note:</u> For routine parks and recreation department records (accounting records, bids, grants, and service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders and operations/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations subfunctions (no.'s 17-20).	Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

8. Providing Public Cemeteries

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.01	Sexton's (Cemetery) Records. These records include permits issued for all burials within the city limits, as well as identifying information on all bodies on municipal cemetery grounds.	PERMANENT

9. Planning and Improving Economic and Community Development

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.01	Planning Commission Records	
a.	Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets	PERMANENT
b.	Hearing files. These files document citizen appeals to the planning commission, as well as hearings and the commission's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.	Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

10. Recruiting Business and Industry

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10.01	Industrial Development Board Records	
a.	Minutes, meeting agendas, and packets	PERMANENT
b.	Hearing files. These files document citizen appeals to the industrial development board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.	Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10.02	Civic Center Lease Files. These records document the leasing of space at the municipal civic center for business, promotional, or other community events. They include financial records, personnel records, and other routine records that document staffing the civic center, organizing and catering events, and otherwise conducting civic center operations.	Retain 10 years after termination of the lease.

Note: For routine civic center operations records (accounting records; grants, bids and service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders and operations/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the “Administering Internal Operations” subfunctions (no.’s 17-20).

11. Licensing and Permitting

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
11.01	Annual Lists of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality. These records provide summary documentation of business activity in the municipality, and have historical value over time. Information available includes business names, owners’ names, and street addresses. (<u>Note:</u> Not all municipalities create this record.)	PERMANENT
11.02	Records Documenting Business and Occupational (Privilege) Licensing. These records document the issuing of business and privilege licenses and permits as a means of regulating such activities within its boundaries and collecting revenue. Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-2-35, sets a five-year statute of limitation on the collection of such fees	Retain 2 years following audit.
11.03	Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board Liquor Licenses. These records document the municipality’s submission to the ABC Board of a vendor’s letter requesting approval of a liquor license. A copy of the application for the license is attached. License applications are approved by the council and documented in its minutes prior to sending them to the ABC Board.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
11.04	Bartenders'/Managers' Licenses Applications and Licenses. These records document applications by individuals for licensure as bartenders and bar managers; also the issuing of such licenses in compliance with municipal regulations. Normally, approved applications serve as the license record. Information includes personal data on the applicant, references, and date of license approval or rejection.	Retain until the license is re-newed. Retain expired licenses and unsuccessful applications 3 years.
11.05	Utility Permits/Street Cut Permits. These records document the proper placement of utility poles, sewer lines, and ditches on municipal rights-of-way. They also include permits issued when streets must be cut for such purposes. Information available in the records includes plans and diagrams of pole, line, or ditch locations; names of utility contractors; correspondence, maps or drawings; and permits.	Retain 13 years, or until superseded, obsolete, or no longer useful.
11.06	Commercial and Residential Building Plans, Permits, and Permit Logs. These records document the issuing and tracking of commercial building permits, plans, and drawings by the municipality. Information available may include the building's location, owner's name, contractor's name, and permit number. Disposition is as follows:	
	a. Original commercial building plans	Retain 13 years. Offer to a local public library, archives, or other historical repository prior to destruction.
	b. All other records (residential plans; commercial and residential permits and permit logs; contractors' certificates of insurance)	Retain 13 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-5-222 [Suppl. 1994]).
	c. Abandoned projects. These records include documents, plans, and drawings that are submitted for permitting but apply to abandoned projects. They may include permitting information and notes recorded by the municipality's plan review staff.	Retain 1 year after last action or contact with vendor.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
11.07	Yard Sale Permits. These records document legal authorization from the municipality for citizens to conduct yard sales within the corporate limits. Information available may include the applicant's name and address, the date of issuance, the date of the yard sale, and a copy of municipal rules governing such sales.	
a.	Permits for which a fee is collected (auditable records)	Retain 2 years following audit.
b.	Permits for which no fee is collected (not auditable records)	Retain 1 year.

12. Inspecting

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
12.01	Building Inspection Files. These records document the inspection of commercial and residential buildings for compliance with code regulations. Information available includes the inspector's name, date of the inspection, and a list of any violations found.	Retain 13 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-5-222 [Suppl. 1994]).
12.02	Street and Subdivision Inspection Files. These records document the inspection of municipal streets and subdivisions during and after construction for compliance with building and zoning ordinances. Information includes street or subdivision's location, inspection date, inspector's name, and results of the inspection.	Retain 13 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-5-222 [Suppl. 1994]).
12.03	Bridge Inspection Reports. These records document the periodic inspection of public bridges by inspectors to comply with state and federal requirements. An inventory of bridge structures and inspection data is maintained at the state level (CAR 650.311). The reports include forms and other information on the bridge's age and location structural details, and grade of the structure. Photographs and drawings may also be included.	Retain for life of bridge.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
12.04	Fire Department Inspection Reports. These records document routine building inspections to ensure compliance with the municipal fire code. The series consists of inspection forms and summaries. Information may include: address and description of building, owner's name, inspecting officer's name, date of initial and follow-up inspections, list of violations found, and remarks by the inspector. (See the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 36-19-11 through -13).	Retain 3 years after correction of violation. If no violation is found, retain 3 years.

13. Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
13.01	Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.	PERMANENT
13.02	Board of Adjustment Hearing Files. These records document citizens' requests for variances to the zoning board of adjustments, hearings on requests, and the board's decisions. They may include applications for variances, protest letters, hearing notices, correspondence and reports, and other material maintained in case files (see the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-52-81).	Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.
13.03	Tree Plans of Subdivisions and Commercial Lots. Plans for tree plantings submitted by developers of commercial lots and subdivisions. They are reviewed by municipal horticultural departments for compliance with tree ordinances.	Retain 13 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-5-222 [Suppl. 1994]).
13.04	Subdivision Files. These files document the municipality's approval of contractors' plans and specifications prior to assuming responsibility for subdivision street maintenance. The records include plans, plats, maps, and specifications showing roads, rights-of-way, drainage ditches, and other surface improvements. They also include statements dedicating streets to the municipality, copies of council resolutions assuming responsibility for street maintenance, soil testing reports, inspection reports, permits, correspondence, and photographs. Disposition is as follows:	

No.	Record Title	Disposition
13.04	a. Final plans, plats, maps, and photographs	PERMANENT
	b. Statements dedicating streets to the municipality; council resolutions	PERMANENT If copies are included with council minutes, duplicates may be destroyed.
	c. Other material in files (reports, permits, correspondence)	Retain 13 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-5-222 [Suppl. 1994]).

14. Abating Nuisances

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
14.01	Animal Control Operations Files (Rabies Immunization Certificates; Reports of Operations; Lists of Animals Impounded, Claimed, Adopted, or Executed). These records document general operations of the municipal animal control department, including licensing and vaccinating pet animals and retrieving, housing, and executing strays. <u>Note:</u> For routine animal control operations records (accounting and purchasing records; service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, telephone/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities; correspondence with pet owners or complaining citizens), follow the disposition statements for such records in the “Administering Internal Operations” subfunctions (no.’s 17-20).	Retain 3 years (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 3-7A-2).
14.02	Nuisance Abatement Notifications and Orders. These records document municipal orders to citizens to eliminate public nuisances (e.g., uncontrolled or dangerous animals, weeds, junk, noise).	Retain 5 years after nuisance is eliminated, fine is collected, or litigation is concluded.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
14.03	Nuisance Abatement Collection Records. These records document the municipality's collection of fees and fines as part of regulating public nuisances, such as uncontrolled or dangerous animals, weeds, junk, and noise (see item 13.02).	Retain 2 years following audit.

15. Maintaining Public Order/Managing Emergencies

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
15.01	Parade or Public Meeting Applications and Permits. These records document the application for and issuance or denial of permits to organizations wishing to conduct parades, marches, assemblies, or other public meetings within the corporate limits. Information in them may include the application date, date of the meeting, name of the sponsoring organization, purpose of the meeting, expected number of participants, and related correspondence.	Retain 2 years following audit. If a parade or meeting results in litigation, retain records until final disposition of the case.
15.02	Municipal Disaster Plans. These records document emergency procedures for restoring municipal government operations and protecting vital records in case of natural disasters or other emergencies. Information in the plan may include: lists of vital records and equipment, locations of back-up record copies and emergency supplies, contact numbers for emergency assistance agencies, names and telephone numbers of disaster recovery team members; and disaster response and recovery procedures.	Retain until superseded. Duplicate the current plan and disperse off-site copies among disaster recovery team members.

16. Financial Management–Taxing and Collecting Revenue

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
16.01	<p>Assessments for Public Improvements. Municipal councils may—after passing ordinances or resolutions and holding public hearings—have property owners assessed when public improvements to streets, sewers or other types of property occur (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-48-5 through -9). The assessment is a one-time charge to property owners. Information in the records includes: the type of assessment, the names and addresses of property owners, descriptions of property, and the assessed value of improvements. Code Section 11-48-34 sets a 20-year statute of limitations on a municipality’s efforts to collect assessments.</p>	Retain 20 years after last effort to collect assessment or property owner’s last acknowledgment of debt.
16.02	<p>Records Documenting the Collection of Municipal Taxes. These records document the collection of sales, use, lodging, liquor, gasoline, tobacco, and <i>ad valorem</i> taxes by the municipality. They also include reports of such taxes collected for the municipality by the county tax collector or the state Department of Revenue.</p> <p><u>Records Management Recommendation:</u> It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the municipality’s efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until the settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-2-35, sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting “amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes.”</p>	Retain 2 years following audit.
16.03	<p>Records Documenting Auditing of Businesses and Enforcement of the Municipal Tax Code. These records document enforcement of the municipal tax code, including audits of businesses within the corporate limits. They do not include tax cases that proceed to litigation (see item 16.09 below).</p>	Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the audit was closed and all claims were settled.
16.04	<p>Redeemed Bonds and Interest Coupons. These records document the issuance and redemption of bonds, including interest coupons. Information on the bond or coupon may include: descriptions of bonds or interest coupons, the amount of the bond and/or interest, and the name and address of the person presenting the demand for payment.</p>	Retain 2 years following audit.

17. Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
17.01	Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records document policies and procedures established by the municipality on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and municipal employees. Such policies may be available to citizens in printed form.	PERMANENT
17.02	Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the municipality; they are collected and used only as reference sources of information.	Retain for useful life.
17.03	Annual Reports. Municipal agencies may create annual narrative reports describing their activities during the calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of the town or city and its government.	PERMANENT
17.04	Historical and Publicity Files. These records include news releases, newsletters, brochures, periodicals, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements created by municipal officials or agencies.	PERMANENT Retain in office or transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.
17.05	Websites. Municipalities develop web sites for responding to public inquiries and providing information on municipal affairs. Material on the site may include: information on the municipality's location, population, demography; organization and officials; economic, cultural, and educational resources; and other information describing the town or city's "way of life."	PERMANENT Preserve a complete copy of the website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
17.06	Public Notices. These records are official notifications of the time and place of regular and special meetings of the municipal council or other municipal commissions, boards, or authorities. They also include notices of public hearings on issues affecting the municipality and copies of newspaper announcements of municipal ordinances, decisions, or activities (proofs of publication).	Retain 2 years following audit.
17.07	Official Bonds and Oaths. These records comprise copies of official bonds and oaths required of municipal officials and other personnel under Title 11 of the Code of Alabama 1975. They include oaths of office, power of attorney statements, insurance policies, and other surety bonds. Original bonds and oaths are filed at the county probate office.	Retain 2 years following audit.
17.08	Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of the municipality's affairs in its relations with local citizens and businesses, other governmental agencies, and the general public. It relates to everyday matters (such as answering inquiries, providing information, or performing mandated services) rather than to policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact.	Retain 3 years.
17.09	Legal Case Files. These records document lawsuits filed by or against the municipal government.	Retain 6 years after the case is closed.
17.10	Complaint Files/Unmitigated Claims for Damages. These records document damage claims against the municipality that are resolved without litigation.	Retain 2 years after settlement or denial of complaint or claim (Code of Alabama 11-47-23).
17.11	Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses used by municipal personnel.	Retain for useful life.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
17.12	Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of mail, telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.	Retain for useful life.
17.13	Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for county personnel.	Retain 1 year.
17.14	Records Management Documentation	
	a. Records documenting implementation of the municipality's approved RDA. These records include records management plans, records inventories, finding aids, and destruction notices.	Retain 2 years following audit.
	b. Copy of approved RDA. The RDA provides legal guidelines for the disposition of municipal records. The municipal clerk should maintain a signed copy of the RDA and distribute copies to other agencies as needed.	Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the RDA was superseded.
	c. Local government records deposit agreements. These records are formal agreements executed by the municipality so that a local records repository (library, archives, or historical society) may accept physical custody of long-term records. They include inventories of records in the repository. (<u>Note:</u> Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact ADAH.)	Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.
	d. Records request forms. A municipality may ask visitors wishing to examine records to complete an identification form before providing access. Information in such forms may include visitor's name and contact information, date and time of request, records requested, reason for request, and staff comments.	Retain 2 years following audit or until any resulting litigation is concluded.
17.15	Computer Systems Documentation. These files include hardware and software manuals and diskettes, warranties. <u>Disposition:</u> Retain former system documentation 2 years after the audit period in which the former hardware and software no longer exist anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.	

18. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
18.01	Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.	
a.	Departmental budget estimates and requests. These records contain information submitted by municipal departments during budget preparation.	Retain 2 years following audit.
b.	Approved annual budgets. These records are the final municipal budgets approved by the council. Usually, they take the form of ordinances.	PERMANENT If copy of budget is included with minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.
c.	Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle (budgeted and actual revenue reports, investment reports, expenditure reports, encumbrance reports, etc.)	Retain 2 years following audit.
d.	Annual financial reports. At the end of the fiscal year, a summary statement of municipal finances may be included in council minutes and published in the local newspaper.	PERMANENT If a copy of the report is included with the minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.
18.02	Audit Reports. These records document the municipality's overall financial condition, and the findings of its independent auditor during each audit period.	PERMANENT
18.03	Accounting Records	
a.	Routine accounting records. These are records of original entry or other routine accounting transactions, including journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, invoices for services, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, and other supporting documentation.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
18.03	<p><u>Note:</u> Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under RDA item 18.07.</p> <p><u>Records Management Recommendation:</u> It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the municipality's efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until the settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-2-35, sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes."</p> <p>b. General Ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances. These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue (taxing and licensing), purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.</p>	
	Records created prior to 1975	PERMANENT
	<u> </u> Records created in or after 1975	Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.
18.04	<p>Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Disposition for grant-related purchasing records is provided under RDA item 18.07.</p>	Retain 2 years following audit.
18.05	<p>Contracts, Leases, Franchises, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, franchises, and agreements entered into by the municipality, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.</p>	Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-2-33).

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
18.06	<p>Records of Formal Bids. These records document the municipal bid process, which is subject to the requirements of Title 41, Section 16 of the Code of Alabama.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Records documenting bids on products or services obtained by the municipality. These records include municipal requests for bid proposals, successful and unsuccessful bids by product or service vendors, and related correspondence. b. Lists of eligible bidders. Municipalities may compile lists of persons or businesses who have filed requests to be notified of bids on projects, products, or services required by the municipality. Note: Requests from bidders to be included on the list may be treated as Routine Correspondence (RDA item 17.08). c. Correspondence with vendors slated for removal from the list of eligible bidders. Under Section 41-16-52(a) of the Code of Alabama, any listed bidder who fails to respond after receiving three solicitations for bids may be stricken from the eligible list. This correspondence documents the municipality's efforts to warn unresponsive vendors that they will be dropped from the list unless they ask to remain eligible. It includes forms or letters sent out by the municipality and any responses from the vendors. 	<p>Retain 7 years after bids are opened (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-16-54[e]).</p> <p>Retain 3 years after last contact with listed vendors.</p> <p>Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the bidder is removed from the list.</p>
18.07	<p>Grant Project Files. These records document the municipality's application for and conduct of grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources. Disposition is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Financial reports, interim narrative reports, and correspondence. These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful grant applications. b. Subsidiary financial records. These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports. (See federal Rule 1354.) 	<p>Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.</p> <p>Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.</p>

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
18.07	<p>c. Final narrative report. Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.</p> <p>d. Revenue sharing files. These records were formerly created to document financial activities related to the defunct federal revenue sharing program.</p> <p>e. Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Files. These records were formerly created to document administration of a federal program to provide job training and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>PERMANENT</p> <p>Destroy.</p> <p>Destroy.</p>
18.08	Investment Reports. These records provide summary documentation of the municipality's financial investments.	Retain 2 years following audit.
18.09	Travel Records. These records document requests by municipal personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms and itineraries.	Retain 2 years following audit.

19. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.01	Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets	PERMANENT
19.02	Personnel Hearing Files. These records document various types of hearings held by the municipal personnel board, such as demotion hearings, hardship rules hearings, grievance hearings, dismissal appeals, discrimination appeals, layoff appeals, and citizen complaints.	Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.
19.03	Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.04	Employee Newsletters. These records are internal newsletters created for municipal government employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.	PERMANENT
19.05	Job Classification and Pay Plans. These records document the various job classifications used by the municipality. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each municipal position. The required retention depends on whether the municipality has a separate personnel department:	
	a. Personnel department copy (or copies held by individual municipal departments if there is no personnel department)	PERMANENT
	b. Copies held by other municipal departments (if municipality has a personnel department)	Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.
19.06	Examination Records. These records document the development of and administration of examinations for employment in municipal positions.	
	a. Examination history files. These files document the development of employment examinations. They include questionnaires, comparison studies, final copies of examinations, and job announcements.	Retain 1 year after examination is no longer in use.
	b. Examination administrative files. These records document the administration of examinations to applicants for municipal positions. They include rating forms, answer sheets, and lists of applicants.	Retain 3 years.
19.07	Certification Records. These records document the process of employee certification. They pertain to individuals deemed qualified for municipal positions after submitting an application and taking an employment examination.	
	a. Employment registers. These records are lists of individuals declared qualified for certain municipal positions. They include the job classification, names of eligible applicants, and their ranking on the list.	Retain 1 year after superseded.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.07	b. Employee certification files. These records document the certification process with individual job applicants. They include questionnaires, training and experience records, grades, notifications, and returned postcards and letters.	Retain 3 years.
19.08	Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the municipality to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.	Retain 2 years following audit.
19.09	Employment Applications. These records document applications by individuals for employment in municipal positions.	
	a. Successful applications	Retain in employee personnel file.
	b. Unsuccessful applications (received in response to specific job announcements)	Retain 3 years.
	c. Supplemental data forms. Information on these forms includes the job applicant's name, Social Security number, date of birth, race, gender, and recruitment source. The form may be separated and filed separately from other information on the employment application.	Retain 6 years after employee separation or 3 years after an unsuccessful application.
	d. I-9 forms. These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Disposition of the employing agency's copy is provided by 8 CFR 274a.2.	Retain 3 years after employment or 1 year after termination, whichever is longer.
19.10	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Files. These records document the municipality's compliance with hiring regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. <u>Note:</u> "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General—[retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31, 1602.20).	Retain 3 years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.11	Employee Personnel Files. These records document each municipal employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. A file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, awards, leave, and salary.	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
19.12	Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all municipal employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.
19.13	Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires. These records summarize overall municipal personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations.	PERMANENT
19.14	Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of municipal personnel, both generally and for individual employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets). These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees.b. Employee cumulative leave/attendance records. These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees.c. Employee sick leave donation records. These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by municipal employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Retain 2 years following audit.Retain 6 years after separation of employee.Retain 2 years following audit.
19.15	Payroll Records. These records document municipal payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees. Disposition is as follows:	

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.15	<p>a. Annual payroll earnings reports/records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (wage and tax statements). These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and federal Form 941.</p> <p>b. Records documenting municipal payrolls. These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.</p> <p>c. Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations. These records document payroll deductions for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement and insurance contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.</p> <p>d. Records documenting payroll deductions. These records document taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.</p> <p>e. Employee "Cafeteria Plan" (Flexible Benefits) Records. These records document salary-reduction type plans authorized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Section 125.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">General information about the plan</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Employee applications, correspondence, enrollment cards and files</p>	<p>Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.</p> <p>Retain 2 years following audit.</p> <p>Retain 6 years after separation of employee.</p> <p>Retain 2 years following audit.</p> <p></p> <p>Retain until superseded.</p> <p>Retain 6 years after termination of the plan.</p>
19.16	<p>Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the municipality's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs, in accordance with established guidelines.</p> <p>a. General information on the program</p>	<p></p> <p>Retain until superseded</p>

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.16	<p>b. Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files</p> <p>c. Employee claims files</p>	<p>Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.</p> <p>Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was filed.</p>
19.17	<p>“Drug-Free Workplace” Records. These records document municipal substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of municipal employees. Under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files. They are generally governed by the requirements of 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). The types of records to be maintained include:</p> <p>_____ Training records (drug and alcohol abuse policy statements, names of employees attending training, documentation of training provided to supervisors on detecting and dealing with employee drug abuse)</p> <p>Records related to the collection process (collection logbooks; documentation of random, pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, or post-accident testing; documentation of employees’ inability to provide testable urine samples for medical reasons)</p> <p>Records related to drug testing (test results, custody and control forms, documentation of employees’ refusal to submit to testing or employee challenges to test results)</p> <p>Records related to employees’ referral to substance abuse recovery programs (referrals by professionals, documentation of program completion, follow-up testing of employees)</p> <p>Retention periods for “Drug-Free Workplace” records are as follows:</p>	
	a. Drug/alcohol abuse policy and procedures documentation	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.17	<p>b. Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee refusals to take tests, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of municipality's annual MIS reports submitted to FTA</p> <p>c. Records related to the collection process and employee training</p> <p>d. Negative employee drug or alcohol test results</p>	<p>Retain 5 years</p> <p>Retain 2 years</p> <p>Retain 1 year.</p>
19.18	Workmen's Compensation Insurance Claim Files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by municipal employees. (See Code of Alabama 1975, Section 25-5-4.)	Retain 12 years and after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.
19.19	Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.	Retain 2 years following audit.
19.20	Employee Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various assistance programs and subsequent services provided.	Retain 2 years following audit.
19.21	Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the federal Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.	Retain 2 years following audit.
19.22	Training Records. These records document the municipality's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources. Disposition is as follows:	

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
19.22	<p>a. Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications. These records document the municipality's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications. <u>Note:</u> Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.</p> <p>b. Training administrative files. These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.</p>	<p>PERMANENT</p> <p>Retain for useful life.</p>
19.23	<p>Reports of Municipal Employees Required to File Statements of Economic Interest. These records include reports to the Alabama Ethics Commission, and related transmittal letters, copies of statements, and correspondence, pertaining to the filing of Statements of Economic Interest by municipal employees. The reports contain the names of municipal employees who are required to file Statements of Economic Interest.</p>	Retain 4 years
19.24	<p>Federal Form 1099. This form is used to report various kinds of income, other than salary, that must be reported for federal tax purposes. It may be issued by the municipality to contract workers, or other temporary workers, who provide services but are not on the regular payroll.</p>	Retain 2 years following audit..

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<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
20.04	Deeds to Municipal Property. These are copies of records that document the municipality's ownership of real property. Deeds are held permanently by the county probate office.	Retain until property is sold. Verify that the county probate office holds the original deed prior to destruction.
20.05	Insurance Policies. These policies document all insurance policies carried by the municipality on its equipment or property.	Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.
20.06	Facilities/Buildings Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in municipal buildings or other facilities.	Retain 1 year.
20.07	Facilities/Buildings Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of municipal buildings, facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.	Retain 5 years.
20.08	Facilities/Buildings Security Records. These records document the municipality's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. They may include visitors' logs or sign-in sheets, alarm system logs, recordings of security monitoring or response, and any other records documenting security staff's response to alarms or emergencies.	

<u>No.</u>	<u>Record Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
20.08	a. Security monitoring or response recordings	Retain 30 days, or until final disposition of any criminal cases or litigation for which recordings provide evidence.
	b. All other records	Retain 3 years.
20.09	Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of vehicles in the municipal motor pool by employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.
20.10	Parking Records. These records document the use of municipal parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.	Retain 2 years following audit.
20.11	Vehicle and Equipment Ownership and Maintenance Files. These records document the ownership and maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the municipality. They may include titles, bills of sale, repair records, and related correspondence.	
	a. ____Ownership records (titles, bills of sale, etc.)	Retain 2 years following the audit period in which equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.
	b. ____Maintenance files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records)	Retain 2 years following audit.
20.12	Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the municipality's long-distance telephone systems by employees during business hours.	Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Municipal Records Disposition Authority

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any . . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record. (For more information, see the ADAH procedural leaflet *Records Destruction Procedures for Local Governments*.)

In addition to authorizing a procedure for legally destroying temporary municipal records, the Local Government Records Commission urges the municipality to establish a quality record-keeping program that will meet its legal and public service needs. Such a program should include the following activities:

- The town or city clerk, clerk-treasurer, or manager, or a designated records manager, should establish a records management liaison in each municipal department. The records officer and liaisons should be responsible for: ensuring the regular implementation of this RDA, maintaining records in compliance with national and state standards, and coordinating the destruction of disposable records.
- Permanent records in the municipality’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation. In addition to records appraised as permanent in the RDA, the Local Government Records Commission has directed that any record created prior to 1900 shall be regarded by the municipality as permanent.
- Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in the RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the state Sunset Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.
- The municipality should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the municipality maintains records solely in an electronic format, it should employ an electronic records management system that is capable of tying retention and disposition instructions to records in the system and of purging temporary records when their retention periods expire. The municipality is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies needed to ensure its records’ preservation and accessibility for the periods legally required.

- Electronic mail may contain permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA's requirements, the municipality should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.
- Microforms of permanent records should conform to quality standards set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Association for Image and Information Management (AIIM). According to the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-44, no microfilmed record may be legally destroyed "until the microfilm copy has been processed and checked with the original for accuracy." Government Records Division staff may examine agency microfilm for compliance prior to destruction of the original records.
- The municipality should notify the ADAH Government Records Division if a new records officer is appointed or if other significant changes occur in records storage conditions or records management procedures. It may also contact the division to request revision of this RDA. Normally, RDA revisions will be submitted to the Local Government Records Commission every two years. ADAH Government Records Division staff will notify the municipality of any commission-approved changes in record-keeping requirements that apply to municipalities on a statewide basis.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission may examine the condition of permanent records maintained in the municipality's custody and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Records Division archivists are available to instruct municipal staff in RDA implementation or otherwise assist the municipality in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this Records Disposition Authority on November 5, 2008.

By: _____ Date: _____
Edwin C. Bridges, Chairman, by Tracey Berezansky

By: _____ Date: _____
Mayor
City/Town of _____